

THE MORRISTOWN GAZETTE.

By JOHN E. HELMS.

MORRISTOWN, TENN., WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 1880.

VOL. XIV--NO. 25.

Entered at the Post-Office at Morristown, Tenn., as second class matter.

TERMS OF THE GAZETTE.

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THE MORRISTOWN GAZETTE.

Subscription Price, \$2.

Gen. Sherman's Letter.

WRITTEN TO GEN. HANCOCK IN THE POLITICAL EXCITEMENT OF 1876-7.

Saying that he disliked to have Troops used, but Orders from the President must be obeyed—Gen. Hancock Pointing Out a Danger in the Electoral Commission Plan.

The following is the correspondence that passed between General Sherman and General Hancock in the winter of 1876-7 relative to the Presidential contest then agitating the country, and the use of the army:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES, Washington, D. C., Dec. 4, 1876.

To Gen. W. S. Hancock, Commanding Division of Atlantic, New York City, N. Y.:

You can take your leave now—the time is appropriate.

(Signed) W. T. SHERMAN, General.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES, Washington, D. C., Dec. 4, 1876.

Gen. W. S. Hancock, New York City, N. Y.:

Dear General: I have just received your letter of the 3d, and have telegraphed you my consent to your proposed trip. I cannot foresee any objections, and hope soon that events will admit of the return of their posts of the companies detached at the South; but every time I make a move in that direction I am met by insuperable objections.

Three of the companies of the First Artillery from Fort Sill report at Columbia, Ohio, yesterday, and will be here this evening. Everything is ready for them. The last company, I suppose, was detained at Sill to await the relief on the way. Tell Gen. Fry (Adjutant-General) that, in case of any orders, I will have them sent to you at New York, and he can execute them. The political orders of Ruger at Columbia I preferred should go from the President to him through the Secretary of War. They were not military. I dislike much to have our soldiers used in connection with a legislative body, but orders coming from the President have to be obeyed. They form a bad precedent, but thus far have prevented a collision of arms between inflamed partisans.

I trust you will find Mrs. Hancock and your St. Louis friends well.

Truly yours,

(Signed) W. T. SHERMAN, General.

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE ATLANTIC, New York City, N. Y., Dec. 4, 1876.

The Adjutant-General, U. S. Army, Washington, D. C.:

Sir: I have the honor to inform you that I leave New York this evening for St. Louis, for a short absence, by permission of the General of the Army.

My Post Office address, while absent, will be Carondelet P. O., South St. Louis, Mo., and my telegraphic address will be Care of Commanding Officer, St. Louis Arsenal, Jefferson Barracks, Mo. Very respectfully, your obedient servant.

(Signed) WINFIELD S. HANCOCK, Major-General Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES, Washington, D. C., Dec. 17, 1876.

Gen. W. S. Hancock, Jefferson Barracks, Missouri.

Dear General: Let your peace of mind may be disturbed by the foolish report, bandied in the newspapers, about your being ordered from New York. I will tell you that there is not a word of truth in it.

Neither the President nor Secretary of War has ever intimated to me such a purpose, and I know I have never said a word or written a syllable to the effect.

I see in the *Republican* (of St. Louis) that not only the order made, but that I destroyed it and tore out the leaves of the record book containing the copy. The whole thing was, and is, an invention by somebody who wanted to create a sensation. The same is true about John Sherman trifling with the President at an interview. He has told me that he has never heard the subject broached; that he would not accept the place, as he prefers to be what is now, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance. I hope you will find the family in good health and spirits, and I hope you will spend with me a peaceful and happy week of holidays. This letter may be superfluous, but the emphatic repetition of a wild rumor in the *St. Louis Republic* suggested to me the propriety of my correcting an impression, if made on you.

No serious changes in command are being contemplated; and when they are, you may be sure that I will give you the earliest notice. There are men, on military matters, who would gladly sow the seeds of dissension among us of the army. Truly your friend,

(Signed) W. T. SHERMAN.

Next in the correspondence comes Gen. Hancock's letter to Gen. Sherman of Dec. 28, 1876, which was printed in the *Gazette* a few weeks ago.

To this Gen. Sherman replied: HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES, Washington, D. C., Jan. 2, 1877.

Gen. W. S. Hancock, New York City, N. Y.:

Dear General: I did not receive your most interesting letter of Dec. 28, from Carondelet, Mo., till yesterday. I am very glad to have your views on the subject of such vital importance. Our standard opinions are mostly formed on the practice of our predecessors; but a great change was made after the close of the civil war, by the amendments of the Constitution giving to the freed slaves certain civil and political rights, and empowering Congress to make the laws necessary to enforce these rights. This power is new and absolute, and Congress has enacted laws with which we are not yet familiar and accustomed. See pages 948, 949, and 1,950. Revised Statutes (section 1,950), Edition 1873-4.

As a matter of fact, I dislike to have our army used in these civil conflicts, but the President has the lawful right to use the army and navy, and has exercised the right, as he believes, lawfully and righteously, and our duty has been, and is, to sustain him with zeal and sincerity.

As to the Presidential election, we are in no manner required to take the least action, but to recognize him as President whom the lawfully appointed officers declare to be such person. I can hope and pray that the Congress will agree on some method before the day and hour arrive. But, in case of failure to elect by or before the 4th of March, there will be a vacancy in both offices of President and Vice-President, in which event the President of the Senate becomes President pro tempore, and a new election will have to be held under the law of 1792. See Title III., chap. I., pages 21, 22, and 23, Revised Statutes.

It is well we should compare notes and agree before the crisis is on us; but I earnestly hope we may pass this ordeal safely and peacefully.

I will be pleased to hear from you at any time. (Signed) W. T. SHERMAN.

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My Dear General: I have been quite busy since my arrival, and have not felt like writing much, so that I have not written to you as I intended in reply to my letter from Carondelet. I wished to notice simply your reference to the Revised Statutes, and one or two other points, in a brief way. I will do so yet, but not to-day. It is too late in the season to accomplish much here in that way—save to put money and get but little satisfaction in return.

The proposition for the joint committee insures a joint solution of the Presidential question if it becomes a law, and in my opinion gives to General Hayes chances he did not have before. I have considered that Mr. Tilden's chances were impregnable. Not so Mr. Hendricks'. Now it seems to me that Gov. Hayes has something more than an equal chance, but the definite results can not be foreshadowed. Fortunately, trouble need not be provided against by the use of the army, should the bill become a law.

If the bill passes, and Gen. Grant vetoes it, Mr. Tilden's chances will be stronger than before—certainly if he and his friends supported the measure. Public opinion will strengthen his position. The danger in the compromise question or joint committee plan is, that the defeated candidate might appeal to the Supreme Court on grounds of illegal (unconstitutional) decisions.

I am, very truly yours, (Signed) WINFIELD S. HANCOCK.

P. S.—Somebody, possibly Fry, has been writing on the subject of military discipline, &c., in the *Army and Navy Journal* of this week. It is worth reading.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES, Washington, D. C., January 25, 1877.

Gen. W. S. Hancock, Commanding Military Division of the Atlantic.

General: An anonymous communication to the Secretary of War, dated Louisville, Kentucky, Dec. 16, 1876, reached my headquarters on the 27th of that month, from the office of the Adjutant-General of the army.

It represents that, "in the contemplated uprising of the people to enforce the inauguration of Tilden and Hendricks, the depot at Jeffersonville is to be seized, and is expected to arm and clothe the Indiana army of Democrats."

The endorsement on this communication, made at your headquarters, dated Dec. 26, 1876, is as follows:

"Official copy respectfully referred to Major General W. S. Hancock, Commanding Division of the Atlantic, who may draw a company from Gen. Ruger, commanding Department of the South, and post it at the Jeffersonville depot, with orders to protect it against any danger."

The terms of the endorsement imply an exercise of discretion on my part, which leads me to write you before taking action.

In my judgment there is no danger of the kind the anonymous communication sets forth, or other kind, at Jeffersonville depot to justify a movement of troops to that place. Such a movement it seems to me would involve unnecessary expense, and would create or increase apprehension for which there is no real danger.

There are no arms or ammunition at the Jeffersonville depot, and if such a force as is referred to could be raised for rebellious purposes it is not likely that it would begin by seizing a depot of army uniforms; and, therefore, if there are grounds for action of the Government, I see no danger in the delay which will result from this presentation of the subject to you.

If, however, in your better judgment, a company should be sent there, it shall be promptly done as soon as you notify me to that effect. As I have already said I do not act at any time, by your instructions you say I may send a company there, which I construe as leaving it somewhat discretionary with me.

I returned on the 31st December, 1876, from St. Louis. I am very truly yours, (Signed) WINFIELD S. HANCOCK, Major-General Commanding.

New York City, Jan. 9, 1877.

Gen. W. T. Sherman, Commanding U. S. Army, Washington.

My Dear General—I have been intending to write to you in acknowledgment of your two recent notes, but I have been so much engaged in hunting a place for the winter and "gathering" up my affairs of business as well as personal matters, owing to my recent absence, that I have deferred doing so.

Now I write to enclose you a copy of a letter I addressed yesterday to the editor of the *New York World*, in reference to an article (special dispatch) which appeared in that paper on Sunday, the 7th. The *World* corrected the matter in its issue of this morning. I would have preferred the publication of my letter, but, as I gave the editor latitude as to the manner of correction, I cannot complain. I suppose.

I have written to no one on the subject of my order to go to the Pacific—reported by the newspapers—save yourself. I have said nothing to any one differing in letter or spirit from what I wrote to you; and I have not seen Buford for years, nor heard of him, nor do I know of any person who has, in that time, met or communicated with him.

I enclose you a copy of the *World's* publication. I am, very truly yours, (Signed) WINFIELD S. HANCOCK, Major-General.

ENCLOSURE.

New York, Jan. 8, 1877.

My Dear Sir: I enclose you a slip cut from the *World* of yesterday (a special dispatch from Washington) headed "a rescinded order; did Gen. Hancock refuse to be transferred to the Pacific coast?"

As an authority is given for the communication, it seems that I should publish notice the same, and it would gratify me if you would, in the manner you may deem best, make such correction as would be most likely to remove any misapprehension on the subject.

I have not received any orders transferring me from this station, nor any intimation of the existence or contemplation of such orders. Hence I did not refuse to be transferred to the Pacific coast. I have not tendered my resignation. All of my information in the matter has been derived from the newspapers of the day. I had no communication whatever relating to the subject with the authorities until after the rumor of my removal was published from Washington as groundless. Then Gen. Sherman wrote me to the same effect.

I am in no wise responsible for any statement contained in the dispatch in question, or for any misconception which has arisen concerning the subject from first to last. I am, very truly yours, (Signed) WINFIELD S. HANCOCK, To Mr. William H. Murbit, Editor of the *New York World*, 32 Waverley Place, New York.

Gen. W. T. Sherman, United States Army, Washington, D. C.:

My Dear General: I have been quite busy since my arrival, and have not felt like writing much, so that I have not written to you as I intended in reply to my letter from Carondelet. I wished to notice simply your reference to the Revised Statutes, and one or two other points, in a brief way. I will do so yet, but not to-day. It is too late in the season to accomplish much here in that way—save to put money and get but little satisfaction in return.

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